

Understand Your Prospects

Written by Steve Marr

Monday, 17 December 2018 00:55

I spend time marketing a damage restoration business to prospects. I visit insurance agents, property managers, apartment building managers as well as managers of assisted living facilities.

If I'm not careful I would make the same pitch to an insurance agent that I make to the assisted living manager. Instead, before I make my initial call; I check out the business online. How long have they been in business? Do they have a special focus? If I am able to identify the owner, can I learn anything about them from LinkedIn or Facebook? When I make my initial inquiry, I check out the office. Are papers scattered? Is the space disorganized? My approach may be different for a disorganized manager than when I see a clean, well-organized office.

Further, I want to understand if there is a specific business focus. Are most customers from one geographical area? Do they have a lot of commercial customers? Do they insure manufactured homes? When I can answer these questions, I am better equipped to understand the needs of the insurance agent.

I also want to understand how each office processes claims. Some agents immediately refer a policyholder to an 800 number claim processing phone bank and step back. Other agents want to be involved in ensuring the best service is offered to their customers. These are agents I prefer to target.

Also an agent who has a lot of commercial work will have different requirements than a homeowner. The commercial work agent wants to know if we are capable of effectively and quickly cleaning commercial property after a disaster. Cleaning a whole floor after a hotel flood, which we have done, is different from responding to a small sink overflow.

My goal is to understand from each agent which element of service they find most critical. Some agents want fast response time, others complain about long delays in reconstruction, while still others are frustrated with slow or non-existent status reporting. When I understand what the needs are of specific insurance agents, I'm able to target my information to speak to their

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concerns.

Property managers have different perspectives. Property owners expect damage to be repaired quickly at the least possible cost and with the least disruption for their tenants. Work cost with insurance referrals is typically not a critical issue. The insurance industry uses software systems to address payment. Often the deductible is high and the customers self-pay. Property managers are not as interested in how much the insurance company will settle for; they're more concerned about keeping their loss to a minimum.

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